A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION:

Thursday, February 7. 1712.

AS I begin to draw near the close of this Volume, so, as Things now appear before us, the Time draws on, when the Liberty of speaking this Way, will be taken from us——And truly I am one of those, that rejoyce now at the Period being to be put to a Work, which however now Treated by those it has served, *yet*, and that by the Confession of themselves, and of their Enemies also, *has serv'd them*, and shall stand as a Monument of the Gratitude of the Age, to their *True Born-English* Posterity.

I must confess, that when they talk'd of a Licenser for the Press, I offer'd Reasons against it, as an Invasion of Liberty; but I have sometimes thought less of that Injury than formerly, when I find our People in every Coffee-House taking the Liberty of every Author that Writes, away from him, by Censure, Raillery, Reproach, and the like; That an Author, if he does not please them, or speaks his Thoughts freely, is Treated as if he was a Servant in their Pay, and Subjected to their Correction; That whoever did not oblige them, and say as they said, was dishonest to them, and a Breach of the Author's Duty.

Thus

Thus plentifully has a part of the World Treated me of late, becauſe, forſooth, I have not pleaſed them, in ſpeaking my Thoughts freely about the Peace —— I might ask them, Who of you have I wrong'd? In whoſe Pay was I lifted? Whoſe Wages have I taken, and not done their Work, that you Treat me thus Maſterly? One particular witty Fellow, berogues and abuſes me in a Letter, Sign'd *F. Williamſon*; but after a Friendly Adverriſement to him, to let me know how to direct an Anſwer to him, it ſeems he is aſham'd to own his Language —— Well, *he tells me once I ſerv'd them, and writ well for them*, &c. —— But now! *&c. Billingſgate enough* —— Well, Mr. *Williamſon*, if I ſerv'd you once, *for I muſt allow you to be a very good judge*, —— What was it for? If for Wages —— Did ye pay me? If for Affection and Principle, your *Gratitude* is mighty remarkable —— *And ſo much to good Mr.* Williamſon, Anſwer a Fool in his Folly, *&c.* —— Now you are gone from your Temper, your Principles, your Probity, and your Party, and I cannot ſpeak for you —— What muſt I do, ſpeak for you againſt Judgment, and Conſcience, and Principle! God knows, I cannot for my Life: *I cannot ſay* the Propoſals of *France* were receiv'd as Preliminaries, unleſs I would ſpeak againſt Conſcience; *I cannot ſay* we ſhould give all the *Spaniſh Monarchy* to the Houſe of *Auſtria*, and make him Powerful enough to ſink the *Proteſtants* in *Germany*, without betraying my Senſes: *I cannot ſay* the Queen has made a Peace before-hand, and then has ſet us all to mock God, in praying for a Bleſſing on the Treaty, unleſs I would belye my Reaſon: *I cannot ſay* that a Trade to the *South-Seas* is not capable of being an Advantage to us, unleſs I ſpeak againſt Knowledge: *I cannot ſay* we have no need of a Peace: *I cannot ſay* that I do not believe a Good Peace may be had by a Treaty, *and the like*: And what then? And while ye Rail at me for ſpeaking this Truth, pray, What is your Authority, and who are ye, Gentlemen, that I may not ſpeak my Mind as freely as you? —— If I could have oblig'd you, without belying my own Knowledge and Experience, I would have done it —— But as I have not, for Fear or Favour, ſaid one Word for you, ſo I can ſolemnly proteſt, I have ſpoken neither for Gain, or the Hopes of it; neither to oblige or ſerve any one Party or Perſon in the World; on the other Hand, I never did, nor ever ſhall refrain ſpeaking what my own Conſcience dictates to me to be Truth, and ſeaſonable, for fear of the Face of any Man, or Body of Men, in my Life. He that fears the Oppreſſion of Power, can be no Servant of Truth, nor has any of your Fawning Scriblers dar'd to ſpeak the Truths that I have done, or to ſuffer for them either, as I have done: But he that fears Reproach and Clamour, is a Slave to his Pride, and abject below a Criminal —— *For my part*, being fully ſatisfied that I ſpeak not only from Principle, but for the Publick Service, I rejoyce in the Contempt I ſee put upon me, by Clamorous and Noiſy Men, who are ſo far from grieving me, that they never rob me of a Smile, nor ever mov'd me to any Return, but to pity the Poſſeſſion of Prejudice, which they are now under, and which God, in his due Time, I hope will deliver them from.

On the other Hand, neither can I flatter or refrain ſpeaking with Freedom, in the Cauſe of Truth, when Men of Power take Steps to prove them not Infallible; my endeavour is to prevent the Oppreſſions, which the Fury of our Parties Threatens every Side with —— When Men of Honour and Figure are puſhing their Party-Intereſts with ſuch an Ill-Principl'd Rage, that they can ſell or give up their Faithful Friends, who had for them acted to every Extreme of a Diſintereſted Affection; who had rejected for them all *Separate Treaties*, and all Accommodations —— When theſe Things are carried on, I have never regarded my own Safety or Intereſt, to keep me ſilent; If I have had any Intereſt or Favour with Men in Power, while thoſe I have

have endeavour'd to serve by it have Reviil'd me with acting for the Ministry; *I speak now of the Times as well of the last Ministry as of this*; I have always improv'd that Interest with faithful Remonstrances and Representations, *as far as Duty and Decency would permit*, to serve and save the Interest and Persons, who have at the same Time abused me, and I do so still; and I do it from this Principle, That it is the Cause, and not the Persons, I desire to serve; and he that sees in secret will Reward me, if he approves the Service; *as for the Men*, I know them too well, to expect or desire it from them, nay, I am content they shall stone me, and throw dirt at me, while I am doing this for them; my Witness is within myself, and yet I am not without Witnesses of the Fact neither.

And now the Time is coming, when you shall feel your hurt before you hear of it; Authors shall no more Ruin themselves and Families, to awaken you; your Friends have sold you, and your Enemies Triumph over you —— And God will humble you for your Party-Sins. But yet after a Season of Suffering, when your Eyes shall be open'd, and a Spirit fit for Deliverance appear among you —— You shall be deliver'd, and your Posterity shall be wiser and honester than their Fathers.

When the Occasional-Bill pass'd among us, I took the Freedom to say, it was but the beginning of the *Jacobite Projects* against the Peace of *Britain*, and now *I am sorry to say*, I am too true a Prophet: The *Toleration* in *England*, and the *Union* in *Scotland*, are the only two Eye-Sores of the *High-Flying Party* in both Kingdoms; the Oppression of the Test, I cannot, nor ever shall be able to defend, from being an Invasion or Violation, of the Liberty of the *Dissenters*: The Projects of the Episcopal Party in *Scotland*, I must esteem as a Mine dug under the Union, to Sap the Foundations of the Church Establishment there; I need not explain myself, the Party are not Mealy-Mouth'd, they own it freely; *Soon and hasty be your Fall*, is the End of a Song or rather piece of Railing Ribaldry made in *Scotland* upon the *Presbyterian Church*.

The means to bring this to pass, is to get the *English* to Impose the Common-Prayer Book upon them there —— This Involv'd that Nation once in Blood, and those Men depend upon it, that it will do so again; by this Method, they drove those Good People to Insupportable Difficulties, and thereby to Arms; *that is*, according to our High-Church Memorial, *Nature Rebell'd against Principle* —— And then destroy'd them for Rebels; and this is the declar'd Design of those People again; and I offer myself Pledge for the Truth of the Suggestion, at the Peril of my Life.

This, according to the Duty all Men owe to Truth, and to a Righteous Cause, I have faithfully and freely Represented, without Regard to Personal Hazard, or the Resentment of Men in Power; and therein I have discharg'd, not my Debt to the Church of *Scotland* only, which I freely own and believe to be as pure in Doctrine, and exact in Discipline, as any Christian Church in the World, and am not asham'd to declare it; but I discharge thereby the Duty also of a Subject to the Legislature of *Britain*, in humbly laying the Truth Naked before them, that it may be out of the Power of Wicked Men to do harm, by placing false Lights before them, and Misrepresenting a Faithful and Upright People. I have many Snarling Letters sent me, by Persons, who in Charity, I am to suppose write to be Satisfied, and they seem to wonder why a Toleration should not be granted to the Episcopal People in *Scotland*, as well as to the *Dissenters* in *England*.

This Paper allows no Room for a Polemical Discourse of Toleration, nor is the present Case capable of a long Debate —— It requires a great deal of History, to enter into an Account of the Nature *of a Toleration there*, and the Specifick difference between that and a *Toleration here*; and how

how the Words really do signifie the same Thing.

But this one Answer is *ad Hominem*, saving to ourselves the Liberty of entering into others, as Occasion presents—— Tho' there were a Thousand Reasons for a Toleration, and not one against it, *which is far from being the Case here*; yet if you have Bargain'd with them, if they have Capitulated with you, and if they told you upon your Uniting, That they could not Agree to it, and gave you such Reasons as you were then Satisfied with, and that you promis'd them not to do it —— If this be so, then you cannot, you must not do it; —And it savours of an ill Design in those, who *in Scotland especially*, desire it; and there I leave it.

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